

dedicated team committed to providing the highest level of safety, protection of life, property and the environment to those who live, work or play in our community. The five fire companies that comprise the department: Hook & Ladder Co., No. 1, Mamaro Engine & Hose Co. No. 1, Columbia Engine & Hose Co. No. 2, Volunteers Engine & Hose Co. No. 3, and Halstead Manor Engine & Hose Co. No. 4 operate out of four fire stations with over 200 volunteers. The Mamaroneck Fire Department operates with five Engines, two Aerial Trucks, two Utility Trucks, three Chiefs Vehicles, and one Fire Boat and responds to approximately 800 fire emergencies a year.

The Mamaroneck Fire Department has always done an outstanding job keeping its citizens safe, and as a result The New Jewish Home, Sarah Neuman is honoring the department at their 25th Anniversary celebration. They have chosen to acknowledge an incredible partner in the community. I too would like to congratulate the Village of Mamaroneck Fire Department Day in recognition of the significant impact they have made and continue to make in the community, and as a partner with The New Jewish Home, Sarah Neuman in serving the elders of our community.

ADVANCING HUMAN RIGHT TO COMBAT EXTREMISM

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today I held a hearing on advancing human rights to counter extremism. Today's hearing explored ways to combat violent extremism by advancing fundamental human rights—in particular, freedom of religion.

Advancing freedom of religion, both as an end in of itself and as means to achieve peace, stability and human flourishing, should be a core objective of U.S. foreign policy.

Religious liberty is opposed, however, by extremists who seek to impose their vision of an ideal society upon all. Oftentimes, the "choice" they give to those who seek to adhere to the beliefs they were raised in boils down to convert or die.

This clash manifests itself in numerous parts of the world, in varying degrees of intensity, but is particularly acute in certain Muslim-dominated regions, where groups such as ISIS, al-Nusra, Boko Haram and al-Shabaab seek to bring all under their sway.

To personalize this, let me tell you about a victim of Boko Haram that I have gotten to know.

On a trip to Nigeria, at an IDP camp in Jos, I met Habila Adamu.

Dragged from his home by Boko Haram terrorists, he was ordered to renounce his faith.

With an AK-47 pressed to his face, he was asked "are you ready to die as a Christian."

With amazing courage Habila answered, "yes, I am ready to die as a Christian."

He was asked a second time and he repeated his answer—"yes I am ready to die as a Christian."

This time, the terrorist pulled the trigger. A bullet ripped through Habila's face. He crumpled to the ground, left for dead.

By some miracle, he survived.

I asked Habila to come to Washington, D.C. to tell his story. At a Congressional hearing I chaired, Habila told my committee—"I am alive because God wants you to have this message—knowing Christ" is so much "deeper" than merely knowing Boko Haram's story of hate and intolerance.

He closed his testimony with this—"do everything you can to end this ruthless religious persecution. . . but know Christ first"

It should be stressed that extremist groups such as Boko Haram coerce and oppress not only members of other faiths, but also and in particular members of the Muslim faith whose interpretation of Islam differs from that of the extremists. They also target converts, whose consciences lead them to choose a different path.

To combat these extremists, the ideological battlefield is just as important as the territorial one. By emphasizing human rights principles, we counter extremist messaging, support moderate voices and promote the popular aspirations of people around the world who simply want to live in peace and freedom.

Last year, an important weapon in the fight against extremism was passed by Congress and signed into law: The Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Act. This law provides tools and resources to our State Department to integrate religious freedom into our diplomacy the world over in order to counter violent extremism abroad.

In building upon the landmark International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, this law addresses the changed circumstances in the world since 1998 by designating non-state extremist groups such as Boko Haram and ISIS as "violent non-state actors," making it easier to ostracize and apply financial sanctions against their members, thereby helping starve extremists of resources.

The law strengthens the ability to investigate and monitor religious persecution, creating a "Designated Persons List" of violators while also setting up a database of those detained, imprisoned and tortured for their faith, so that the victims are not forgotten, but rather can be more readily advocated for. Indeed, the Frank Wolf Act elevates the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, thereby enhancing the ability to advocate on behalf of victims of religious persecution.

Finally, the Act requires that our Foreign Service Officers undergo training in religious liberty, so that they are able to integrate this important tool into their daily work.

Before we move on to my colleagues' remarks, I would like to thank my friend and colleague, Congressman FRANCIS ROONEY, the former United States ambassador to the Holy See, for his interest in this subject. Today's hearing was brought about in large part due to his persistent interest in these themes, and I want to thank him for joining our subcommittee for this hearing today.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MRS. NEZZIE MARION

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy Mrs. Nezzie O. Mar-

ion of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, who passed away at the age of 102 on October 14, 2017. Born on May 15, 1915 to Mr. & Mrs. Allanza and Katie Oglesby, Mrs. Marion was Georgia-born and raised.

Married to the late Mr. Willie Preston Marion in 1937, the young couple moved to Fort Lauderdale in 1940. Mrs. Marion's spiritual life began at a young age. She was a faithful member of the New Mount Olive Baptist Church for 77 years, where she served on the Usher Board and the Pulpit Aide Ministry.

Mrs. Marion led her family by example as a strong Christian loving mother, embodying what it means to be a true servant to her community. Fond memories of her will forever remain with her four children: Willie Marion, Polly Harden, Lonzie Marion, and Beverly Hardemon; two sisters: Mary Caldwell and Annie Wallace; eleven grandchildren, nineteen great grandchildren, and eight great-great grandchildren, along with a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and other loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Nezzie O. Marion will be remembered by the many people she touched in her 102 years of life. She was truly a blessing to the Fort Lauderdale community. I am so pleased to honor her life and legacy. She will be dearly missed.

ENHANCING VETERAN CARE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 1266, the Enhancing Veteran Care Act.

I support this legislation because it would establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs the capacity to conduct independent analysis of the healthcare services provided by the VA to our nation's veterans.

The Enhancing Veteran Care Act would authorize the Secretary to contract with nonprofit private healthcare auditors and investigators to investigate a VA Medical Center and to then, assess and report deficiencies found at the medical center.

This bill will not vacate the authority of the Inspector General or the Government Accountability Office from conducting investigations of VA medical facilities.

Mr. Speaker, the reason this important legislation is needed is illustrated by the tragic and heart breaking cases of thousands of veterans who were left waiting for care for serious medical conditions.

The debt that we owe to our nation's veterans is immeasurable. Their sacrifices, and those of their families, are freedom's foundation.

Without the brave efforts of all the soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and Coast Guardsmen and women and their families, our country would not live so freely.

In the State of Texas we have 1,099,141 Veterans under the age of 65 and 590,618 who are over the age of 65. There are over 1,689,759 veterans living in our state.

The 18th Congressional District has 20,607 under age 65 and 9,844 Veterans over the age of 65.

Nationwide more than 9 million veterans and their families enrolled in the VA health care system in 2014,